

SUPPORT FOR THE AMENDMENTS

The specification has been amended to recite a claim of priority to related International and Japanese patent applications, as set forth in the originally filed Application Data Sheet.

The specification has also been amended to correct an obvious typographical error inadvertently introduced during translation of International patent application PCT/JP04/012312, the relevant page of which is attached for the Examiner's convenience.

A substitute abstract is provided to address the Examiner's objection to the original abstract.

Support for the amendment is found in the specification and claims as originally filed.

The present amendment cancels claims 1-7, and adds new claims 8-27.

Support for newly added claims 8 and 16-18 is found at specification page 5, lines 13-27, page 6, lines 1-7, page 8, lines 16-18 and 23-25, page 12, lines 10-21, and page 31, lines 9-21, as well as original claims 1 and 2.

Support for newly added claim 9 is found at specification page 13, lines 10-12.

Support for newly added claims 10 and 11 is found at specification page 12, lines 2-6.

Support for newly added claims 12 and 13 is found at specification page 13, lines 20-24.

Support for newly added claims 14 and 15 is found at specification page 6, lines 8-13, and page 17, lines 15-23, as well as original claim 3.

Support for newly added claims 19 and 20 is found at specification page 14, lines 3-8 and 21-27, and page 15, lines 1-21.

Support for newly added claim 21 is found at specification page 16, lines 3-11.

Support for newly added claim 22 is found at specification page 16, lines 20-27, and page 17, line 1.

Support for newly added claims 23 and 24 is found at specification page 1, lines 7-11, page 5, lines 13-17, and page 27, lines 15-18, as well as original claim 1.

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Support for newly added claims 25 and 26 is found at specification page 7, lines 9-15, as well as original claims 6 and 7.

Support for newly added claim 27 is found at specification page 6, lines 14-27, page 7, lines 1-8, page 15, lines 22-27, and page 16, lines 1-11, as well as original claims 4 and 5.

It is believed that these amendments have not resulted in the introduction of new matter.

REMARKS

Claims 8-27 are currently pending in the present application. Claims 1-7 have been cancelled, and new claims 8-27 have been added, by the present amendment.

Applicants wish to extend their appreciation to Primary Examiner Greene for the helpful and courteous discussion held on December 9, 2008, with their undersigned Representative. During the meeting, the prior art and double patenting rejections were discussed, along with potential amendments and/or arguments, as well as the filing of a terminal disclaimer, for overcoming the rejections. The content of this discussion is believed to be reflected in the remarks set forth herein.

The rejections of: (1) now cancelled claims 1, 4, 6 and 7 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated over Nagai (U.S. Patent 5,846,276); and (2) now cancelled claims 3 and 6 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being obvious over Nagai in view of Beall (U.S. Patent 7,001,861), are obviated by amendment, with respect to new claims 8-27, which incorporates the limitation of an alkali feldspar according to the formula $(Na_yK_{1-y})AlSi_3O_8$, wherein $0 \leq y \leq 1$, into claim 8.

New claim 8 recites a honeycomb filter comprising an aluminum titanate sintered product obtained by a process comprising firing at a temperature of 1,250-1,700°C a raw material mixture comprising: 100 wt. % of a first mixture comprising TiO_2 and Al_2O_3 in a molar ratio of 40-60/60-40; and 1-10 wt. % of a second mixture comprising: an alkali feldspar according to the formula $(Na_yK_{1-y})AlSi_3O_8$, wherein $0 \leq y \leq 1$; and a component selected from the group consisting of an oxide having a spinel structure comprising Mg and/or MgO , MgO and a precursor compound comprising Mg that is converted to MgO by firing.

Nagai describes a honeycomb exhaust gas filter and a corresponding method for removing particulate matter from a diesel engine exhaust gas, wherein the honeycomb exhaust gas filter is an aluminum titanate sintered product produced by sintering at a temperature of 1,500°C a mixture comprising: 100 wt. % aluminum titanate having an equimolar amount of aluminum oxide (Al_2O_3)

and titanium oxide (TiO_2); and 0.5-5.0 wt. % magnesium oxide (MgO) (See e.g., abstract, column 13, lines 10-33, column 16, lines 37-46 and Table 4, column 17, lines 55-63, and Fig. 1). Nagai describes a process for producing the honeycomb exhaust gas filter comprising: mixing and kneading the mixture with a binder and a pore forming agent to produce a kneaded material; vacuum extruding the kneaded material to produce an extruded honeycomb structure; and drying and sintering the extruded honeycomb structure to produce the honeycomb exhaust gas filter (See e.g., column 6, lines 61-67, column 7, lines 1-9, column 13, lines 10-33, column 21, lines 57-67, column 22, lines 32-46). Nagai describes that the honeycomb exhaust gas filter has: a wall thickness of 0.2-0.7 mm (See e.g., column 23, lines 19-20, column 24, lines 30-32); a cell density of 4-81 cells/cm² (See e.g., column 25, lines 36-38); a porosity of 29-70% (See e.g., column 8, line 31, column 26, lines 61-62); and a thermal expansion coefficient of less than $0.8 \times 10^{-6} \text{ }^{\circ}\text{C}^{-1}$ (See e.g., column 17, Table 5).

Beall describes a honeycomb exhaust gas filter and a corresponding method for removing particulate matter from a diesel engine exhaust gas, wherein the honeycomb exhaust gas filter is a sintered product comprising: aluminum titanate and magnesium titanate (See e.g., abstract, column 1, lines 49-66, column 2, lines 14-16 and 31-47, column 5, lines 34-42, claims 1, 15, 16 and 28). Beall describes that the honeycomb exhaust gas filter has: a wall thickness of 0.016 inches (0.4 mm); a cell density of 200 cells/cm²; a porosity of up to 60%; and a thermal expansion coefficient of less than $4.5 \times 10^{-6} \text{ }^{\circ}\text{C}^{-1}$ (See e.g., column 2, lines 19-25, column 3, lines 9-18).

Nagai and Beall, when considered alone or in combination, fail to disclose or suggest that the raw material mixture comprises an alkali feldspar according to the formula $(\text{Na}_y\text{K}_{1-y})\text{AlSi}_3\text{O}_8$, wherein $0 \leq y \leq 1$, as presently claimed. Accordingly, Nagai and Beall, when considered alone or in combination, fail to anticipate or render obvious the presently claimed invention.

Withdrawal of these grounds of rejection is respectfully requested.

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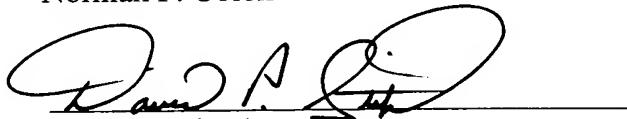
The obviousness-type double patenting rejection of claims 2, 5 and 6 over claims 1, 2 and 4 of Fukuda (U.S. Patent 7,148,168) in view of Nagai is obviated by the enclosed terminal disclaimer disclaiming the terminal portion of any patent issuing from the present application which would extend beyond the full statutory term of Fukuda (U.S. Patent 7,148,168). In view of the enclosed terminal disclaimer, withdrawal of this ground of rejection is respectfully requested.

The objection to the abstract is obviated by the attached rewritten abstract. Withdrawal of this ground of objection is respectfully requested.

In conclusion, Applicants submit that the present application is now in condition for allowance and notification to this effect is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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